

REMARKS

The claimed invention provides a solid, which is stable during storage and which can be dispersed in water without the use of additional solvents or low-viscosity polyethers. In contrast to the conventional dispersions, the present invention affords virtually unrestricted storage stability, it desirably reduces transport costs because it avoids the need to transport the unreacted component water, and the end user can desirably formulate the solids content and required spray viscosity on an individual basis. Nowhere is either the present invention or its attendant advantages disclosed or suggested in the prior art, and the claims are thus believed to present patentable subject matter, as now discussed.

The rejection of Claims 2-9, 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. 4,480,008 (Farronato et al), is respectfully traversed. Farronato et al disclose a solid polymer binder for thermosetting powder coating compositions obtained by combining a particular polyurethane prepolymer and at least one homo- and/or heterofunctional compound which either contains hydroxyl groups or is capable of forming them by reaction. The polyurethane prepolymer contains carboxyl groups and is derived from the reaction of polyisocyanates, hydroxycarboxylic acids, and blocking agents other than oximes (paragraph bridging columns 3 and 4). Farronato et al neither disclose nor suggest the presently-claimed invention, because Farronato et al does not disclose the physical structure of their polyurethane prepolymer *per se*. Nor is there any disclosure or suggestion in Farronato et al that their polyurethane prepolymer is of a type obtainable in the presence of a water-free, organic auxiliary solvent. In addition, Farronato et al's powder coating compositions are not water-dispersible, because the content of COOH groups is not greater than 1.5%.

For all the above reasons, it is respectfully requested that the rejection over Farronato et al be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 2-11, 13-20 and 22-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by either one of U.S. 5,508,370 (Reiff et al '370), U.S. 5,693,737 (Reiff et al '737), or U.S. 5,607,482 (Reiff et al '482), is respectfully traversed.¹

Reiff et al '370 discloses blocked polyisocyanates having molecular weights of 800 to 500g/mol, an NCO functionality of 2.2-4.5, and an NCO content of 5-20%. These hydrophilic blocked polyisocyanates are processed directly to the corresponding dispersions using either auxiliary solvents or low-viscosity polyethers. Solid, blocked, water-dispersible polyisocyanates are not disclosed.

In Reiff et al '482, the hydrophilic blocked polyisocyanates are processed directly to the corresponding dispersions. Again, auxiliary solvents or low-viscosity polyethers are required, and solid blocked polyisocyanates are not disclosed or suggested.

In the present Office Action, the Examiner finds that the above Reiff et al patents disclose an embodiment of their invention wherein the blocked isocyanate adduct is solid and may be dispersed simply by adding the adduct to water.

In reply, the Reiff et al patents neither disclose nor suggest the presently-claimed **pulverulent** materials if the Examiner still believes that the Reiff et al patents disclose pulverulent solids, the Examiner is respectfully requested, in the next Office communication, to point out by column and line where. Nor is there any disclosure or suggestion in the Reiff et al patents that their hydrophilic blocked polyisocyanates are of a type obtainable in the presence of a water-free, organic auxiliary solvent.

For all the above reasons, it is respectfully requested that the rejections over the Reiff et al patents be withdrawn.

¹ As Reiff et al '737 is a divisional application of Reiff et al '370, and thus has the same disclosure, discussion in the text will be with respect to Reiff et al '370 only. The term “the Reiff et al patents” is used in the text when an argument applies to any of them.

The rejection of Claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over any of the Reiff et al patents, further in view of U.S. 6,096,805 (Lange et al), is respectfully traversed. Lange et al does not remedy any of the above-discussed deficiencies of the Reiff et al patents. The Examiner relies on Lange et al for a disclosure of combining hydrophobic blocked polyisocyanates with hydrophilic blocked isocyanates. Nevertheless, even if hydrophobic blocked isocyanates were combined with the blocked polyisocyanates of the Reiff et al patents, the result would still not be the presently-claimed invention.

For all the above reasons, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 2-11 and 13-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is respectfully traversed. With regard to these rejections, as set forth in paragraphs 1-3 of the Office Action, they are now moot in view of the above-discussed amendment. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that it be withdrawn.

For all the reasons given above, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner pass this case to issue. An early and favorable indication of same is kindly requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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